June 24, 1974--Memo re First Phase of Nixon-Watergate Book

The enclosed copies represent the completion of the first phase of the work. I have excised everything I thought was relevant to Nixon as President, as a man, as a "moral" force, as a prophet, and as a conspirator,--that is, everything that I felt lent itself to being excised and still retaining its context and meaning. The longest quotes are about two pages from the Bantam edition and deal with the cover-up; I felt a need to have those quotes so long to preserve the context of them. What remains to be done now is to edit and reorganize what I have, as well as to juxtapose other public quotations from RNN.

Let me explain how the enclosures work, and what I have done. All page references under each quote are to the Bantam edition. In some cases I prefaced the page number with a "B" to indicate Bantam, but I abandonned that practice early on. Each quote is dated, and where there is more than one tape to a date, there is a letter after the date indicating the sequence of the tape, e.g., "April 16, 1973-B" would denote the second tape transcript of April 16. I realize now this is a bit awkward, and it can be overcome by using the date and the appendix number.

Currently, there is little organization to the excerpts. In most of the cases, there are just single sheets on isolated topics, such as "The Kennedys", "Hoover", "The FBI". In some cases I have clipped together several pages which have different headings at the top, because I felt there was a clear thread that related them. I have a large amount on John Dean which I think makes the most sense put together as I have done, particularly on the immunity question, for it becomes apparent that Nixon knew Dean was essential to the Grand Jury to sink Haldeman and Ehrlichman, and thus refused to have Dean granted immunity not for policy reasons, but because he wanted to make sure that Dean kept his mouth shut. There are several categories on the cover-up, and this is perhaps one of the most complex organizational problems. First, I have isolated excerpts from the Sept. 15, '72 tape which indicate either that Nixon had some idea of a cover-up or that he was engaged in what was tantamount to a cover-up, that is, trying to turn off any Congressional investigations. That all should be juxtaposed with quotes from his August 29, 1972 Press Conf. where he says we are not covering up and are fully cooperating with all investigations. Then I have isolated excerpts from the March 13, '73 tape showing that Nixon was informed on that date of information which had to tell him that there was a cover-up, even if he didn't know the details. This can be juxtaposed with his repeated claim that he first learned of cover-up on March 13, as well as with a quote from a legal dictionary which states that a person can become an accessory if he fails to act when informed of information which would reasonably lead to further inquiry which would uncover a crime. The organizational problems on the whole cover-up issue become far more complex beginning with March 21. I have one very large collection of excerpts which have in common the general theme of associating Nixon with participation or instigation of acts and ideas which have the effect of perpetuating the cover-up or covering up the cover-up. From this I have separated things dealing directly with the hush-money to Hunt, and those excerpts show that Nixon ordered it to be paid, knew it was paid, and then devised a false cover-story with Haldeman to protect himself. That can be jurtaposed with Nixon's public lies and apologies on the hush money issue. There is also a separate grouping for the Ellsberg Break-in and related "National Security" cover-ups.

Other topic groupings have unmistakable bearing on the cover-ups. One is the "Dean Report", by which I mean the report Nixon wanted Dean to write in late March; another is Ehrlichman's "investigation" and "report", of which there was really neither but which Nixon has since touted in public as "intensive new inquiries". There is some very revealing stuff on that.

One of the difficulties in this whole format is that it will require a careful and thoughtful reader to pick up a lot of the subtleties, to understand what in many cases

we are getting at. I say this because the format does not allow us to interpret for the reader, does not allow us to explain the meaning we see in a particular quote, etc. To me, this means that the titles and sub-titles we use are going to be of paramount importa nce because they will be virtually our only means of placing a certain interpretation on each quote, or establishing a certain context. This should become apparent to you in going over the headings I have placed atop each page.

A couple examples: I have one sheet which I think I marked "Getting the Truth Out?" On it are two quotes dealing with the Cuban Committee Cover. These quotes are deliberately juxtaposed because they reveal that Nixon was not interested in getting the truth out. In the first quote he is told by Dean that the hush-money did not go through the Cuban Committee, and in the second, Nixon tells Dean that they should still use the committee as a cover, something like "That is the way it is going to have happened" when Dean objects with "But that is not the way it happened." There is another thing on Nixon's promise of condifentiality to Peterson. First I quote him telling HP that all grand jury info. will not be passed on, and then I have some random quotes of Nixon blabbing the stuff to Haldeman and Ehrl.

I just remembered that I also have a selection of excerpts which deal in general with Nixon on moral and ethical issues or which provide an insight into Nixon's sense of values. Some of it is obviously satirical, such as RMN saying "We have to do this right; we have to come clean." Other things give a genuine insight into the shabby character of the man , like "Shit! Everybody bugs everybody else!" or "A lot of Republicans are moral."

The last thing that comes to mind is a collection of the worst of the "unintelligible"s. They should appear prefaced with the quote from Nixon's TV address that the tape transcripts tell the full story of Watergate.

Howard Roffman